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The EXAMINER.

From Friday March 12, to Monday March 15, 1713.

——Falsis Terroribus implet
Ut Magus.—————— Horace.

THE only effectual Way to Overturn a *Free State*, is by making the People Parties to their own Ruin. To bring this about, there must be a Concurrence of many Stratagems and Artifices, of strong Prejudices and well-contriv'd Delusions, laid together in some favourable Juncture; so that vast Multitudes shall conspire with their worst Enemies against Themselves. All the Cunning and Villainy, that humane Nature is capable of, are the necessary Qualifications of those Operators in Mischief, who are engag'd to carry on this Blessed Work: But even these Preparations were known to fail heretofore; and where-ever Arts and Sciences, Peace, Plenty and Freedom flourish'd, it was found a very difficult Matter, to lead the People astray, and Arm them against their own Laws and Liberties, under a false Pretence of defending and securing Both. Perhaps, if *History* were throughly search'd into, few Instances could be produc'd, where a small Body of Seditious Aspiring Men, their Characters well known, and their Designs fully laid open and expos'd, were yet able to lead such considerable Numbers of weak, bigoted, restless Followers, into all their frantick Measures and wild Adventures, to the Disturbance of the publick Tranquility, and the Trouble and Disquiet of a well-order'd Government: Few Precedents could be given of such wretched, and yet such successful Management, more flagrant and remarkable, than those we daily meet with here in *Britain*; in a wise enlighten'd Age, in a great and happy Country; guarded by the best Laws, and govern'd by a Sett of Men in Authority, whose Administration is not less conspicuous for Wisdom and Justice, than for Lenity and Moderation.

I shall give a Proof of this general Accusation, which, with too much Justice, bears so heavily upon many of my Countrymen, in the famous Case of *Rumours* and *Reports*; than which I know of none more remarkable, and that shews the Folly and Weakness of the *Faction* in so broad a Light, and such strong Features and Colouring. *Rumours* and *Reports* are become the common Trading Tools and Engines of wicked Men, and the Masters of Sedition. There are known Academies and Professors of this Art; whither the Superstitious Underlings and Rabble of the Party continually resort, to learn and study such Clamours, Surmises, Apprehensions, and *Political Lyes*, as are proper to be encouraged and set on foot every *Week* or *Month*; and to know what shall happen to them of good or bad Fortune, if they make use of whatever Charms, Amulets, hard Words, and Invocations, their Directors shall think fit to prescribe. The *Philomaths* and *Students* in *Physick* and *Astrology*, residing in the several Spheres of *Moorfields* and *Barbican*, are not better known, nor crouded with more Attendance; tho' in the Telling of *Fortunes*, and Answering of *Horary Questions*, they act with more Caution, by the help of few *Ambiguities* and *Double Entendres*, and are less liable to Mistake: But notwithstanding this difference, their Rivals at the other End of the Town, run away with all the Profits of a prevailing Bigotry and popular Credulity: They labour to avoid Truth, and take pains to be always in the Wrong: They think it sufficient to provide a *Lye* for every Day, without being sollicitous about any Discovery that *To Morrow* shall bring forth to their Prejudice; and yet even picking the Pockets of their Disciples and Followers, does not, as it used to do in other Cases, restore the poor Cullies to a Right use of their Senses.

Raising and Propagating of *Rumours* and *false Reports* is become a perfect Manufacture, and a considerable Branch of Trade. All Proprietors of *Stock*, and Subscribers to the publick *Funds*, with the several busy Creatures, who frequent *Change-Alley* and the adjacent *Coffee-Houses*, are under as great a Necessity of Learning and Practising the whole Art of *Political Lying*, as they are of understanding the true Nature of *Commerce*, the Force and Extent of *Security*, the *Best* of the *Lay*, the true State of *Interest*, *Principal*, *Premium*, *Discount*, *Course of Payment*, or any other Fundamental Article in Trade whatever. By a constant Reading of *Papers* and *Pamphlets*, by *Foreign Correspondence*, and Haunting *Clubs* and *Levees*, they can tell where the Publick is chiefly Distress'd; and can either Contrive or Abett a good hopeful Lye accordingly, whenever they or their Friends, have a mind to sink *Publick Credit*, and *Buy in* upon reasonable Terms; to the Loss of their silly believing Neighbours, who are not in the Secret. Hence it is come to pass, that *Rumours* and *Reports* are now capable of being Valu'd and Apprais'd, as well as any other Commodity. There are Men, who can tell to a very great Nicety, how much such a *Lye* will be worth, and what such a Falshood will bring in at the Markets; how far it will affect the *Companies*, the *Bank*, the *Lotteries*, or any other *Fund*; and what Ornaments and Additions are Necessary, in order to advance the *Neat Produce*, as also in what manner it may be introduc'd, with the fairest Prospect of Success. It was heretofore said, that the *Lawyers* made the most of *Lying*, and by *Nec-nons*, by subtle Distinctions, and scraps of *false Latin*, made themselves a *clear Title* to whatever *Plaintiff* and *Defendant* had been long scrambling for: Thus the Mob and Populace used to Treat the *Honourable Profession*. But all the Artifices of this kind, that ever *Westminster-Hall* was acquainted with, are now to be learn'd nearer the *Exchange*, in much greater Perfection. There you meet with single Traders, who have made a *Plumb* of a *Lye*, that lasted only three Days. There you see fine Houses, rich Furniture and blazing Equipages, all amass'd together upon the Ruins of *Five* or *Six thousand* poor credulous Wretches; who *Sold out* in kindness to their *Party*, and humour'd the Delusion, for fear the Contrivers of the Cheat should miss their Reward. How many Grave *Citts* have we within the *Precincts*, without any violent Pretences to Wit or Invention, except their being known to some Member of the *Kit-Cat*, who, upon the bare strength of a Factious *Genius*, have *Ly'd* themselves into considerable Estates, and fatten'd upon the Spoils of many *Bankrupts*; whose sole Cause of Ruin, was a conscientious Belief and Reliance upon the *Clamours* and *Legends* of their Party; Perhaps, if a fair Calculation were made of the late *Execrable Rumour* about *Her Maj*——'s Indisposition, and the *Coming* of the *Pretender*, and a true Account taken of *Profit* and *Loss*, *Debtor* and *Creditor*, I believe it would appear, that the blind Zeal of the *Whigs*, and their entire Submission to a few Rooks and Sharpers, is a more expensive Evil, than any they are taught to apprehend; and that their own Leaders are the worst of *Jacobites*, since they do not stick to *Tax* the People, and raise Money in the Name of the *Pretender*.

Now I am upon the Subject of this formidable Report of the *Coming of Popery* and the *Pretender*, I cannot

not forbear expreſſing an uncommon Contempt of thoſe Wretches, and ſtrange Indignation at their Conduct, who draw their Money out of the *Funds*, and ſink Publick Credit, out of a ſtrong Apprehenſion of this Imaginary Danger. Such Proceeding is the Height and Quinteſſence of Folly: Since, if there were any Grounds for ſuch a Fear, if the *Pretender* were about to prepare for his Voyage, and really deſign'd to Invade us, their Money would ſtill be as ſafe in the Stocks, as any where. For when Men are about to be Martyr'd, and the Conſtitution to be over-turned, neither *Lands*, *Mortgages*, *Cloſets* and *Cells* under Ground, can be thought a tolerable *Security*; and 'tis madneſs to expect to ſave Money, in a general *Maſſacre* and *Perſecution*. So that this Clamour, were it in any degree probable, can never be made a Reaſon for *Selling out*; and methinks the Cullies of the *Party* ſhould never liſten to their Leaders on this Subject, till they ſee them Selling off all, and preparing to fly into ſome more hoſpitable Country.

But I am amaz'd to find ſo many Men of common Senſe, and converſant in Trade and Buſineſs, treat the Government after this ſhameful Manner, in the eaſy Reception which they give to all ſorts of Scandalous *Rumors* and *Reports*. I remember when *Mock Lotteries* and *little Offices for the Improvement of ſmall Sums of Money* were in Vogue, it was the conſtant Buſineſs of the Proprietors and Managers of thoſe Funds, to anſwer the ſeveral Calumnies and Reflections, which their Competitors us'd to advance againſt them. *Faction* ſeems to regard the *Government* as a Society, of no greater Uſe and Figure in the World, than one of theſe Muſhroom Eſtabliſhments; and imagines it was erected for no other End, but to ſalve all the Difficulties, and remove all the Obſtacles, that the Patrons of *abus'd Liberty* think fit to bring againſt it. There are Merchants, who cannot but know, that their private Fortunes muſt ſink with the Conſtitution; and that *Publick Credit* not only includes *Private*, but is of much greater Conſequence in the World. They think no Caution too much, and no Reſentment too ſevere, wherever the Credit of a Family or a particular Trader is concerned: But yet where a Nation is at Stake, and *Lyes* and *Scandal* are invented and ſpread, to the Prejudice of the Whole, they are not only Calm and Unconcern'd, but very often join in the Contrivance, and hug the Authors of it, as their Friends and Favourites. Suppoſe a *Report* were to be Spirited-up, that the *Great Mogul* was march'd down, and had actually ſeiz'd upon Fort *St. George*; or that our *Factories* in *Africk* were deſtroy'd by the *Negroes*; or that the *Turk* had forbid all Commerce with this Part of *Europe*; I am very ſure, a Story of this ſort could not ſeem half ſo unlikely, as many Things which are confidently told of the Government: It muſt certainly affect our Trading *Companies* very nearly; and could they diſcover the Authors of ſuch a Falſhood, they would take all proper Methods to have them puniſh'd. Why then ſhould they not be as active and buſy, in diſcouraging and ſuppreſſing all Rumors of a higher Nature and more dangerous Tendency; by which not a ſingle *Company* only, but the whole Nation ſuffers and is damag'd? We ſee how Zealous Men are to vindicate their own good Name and Character, and to preſerve their Credit, which is their Livelihood. Hence *Actions of Scandal* are frequent among Traders. Read the *publick Advertiſements*, and you will find one complaining; *That whereas it was maliciouſly reported, that he was going to leave off his Trade* —— Another gives notice; *That ſeveral of his Neighbours have agreed to diſparage his Goods* —— A third inſiſts; *That he is not the ſame* A. B. *mentioned in the* Gazette, *againſt whom a Statute of Bankrupt is awarded* —— A fourth contradicts, *what has been induſtriouſly ſpread concerning him, as that he was dead or gone beyond* - —— And in general, all Shopkeepers and Dealers, treat thoſe as their mortal Enemies, who ſay any thing Prejudicial to their Characters in the way of Trade; and therefore one would think they ſhould look with much greater Abhorrence upon every one, who raiſes a groundleſs Scandal and evil Report upon the Government; wherein not only their own Fortunes, but thoſe of all their Fellow-Subjects are concern'd; ſhould purſue them to the utmoſt Rigor of Juſtice, without any regard to whatever Excuſes a ſelfiſh narrow-ſpirited *Party* ſhall be able to bring in their Behalf.

It is not impoſſible but there may be Men ſo deſperately wicked, as to contrive Miſchief to the State, out of Spite or Envy to the Miniſters, who are at the Helm of its Affairs: And others may perhaps be careleſs as to the welfare of the Whole, ſo the Cauſe of their own particular *Party* Thrives and Proſpers: But ſurely Men of Sobriety, Men of Buſineſs, and Profeſſors of Credit, who are united to the Publick Intereſt, and have large Stakes in the Government, will not think ſo wildly, and act upon a Scheme ſo void of Reaſon and Equity. They muſt know, that their *All* depends on the Conſtitution, and that Supporting the Miniſtry in every thing, that is for the Publick Service, is in effect Supporting Themſelves. Beſides it is no Affront, but a high Compliment to the Men in Power, to let the World ſee, that they would do more Good, and ſerve the Publick in much greater Things, but for a Sett of Ill Men, who oppoſe them in every Thing. They cannot but conſider, that expoſing their Party is not conſulting its Intereſt; and that they then expoſe it moſt, when they defend it in ſuch a Method, as endangers the whole Conſtitution; when all Parties muſt fall together. They muſt believe, that the Provocations of an unjuſt implacable Oppoſition will, of neceſſity, force a State upon Meaſures, very diſagreeable to that Side, who advance a Faction, not only Formidable, but Inconſiſtent with the common Safety: And therefore for all theſe Reaſons, tho' they may go on to gratify their *Old Friends* in ſome few Points, where the *Good of the Whole* is out of the Queſtion; yet in all Conteſts of a higher Nature, where the Conſtitution is ſtruck at, they muſt prefer the Intereſt of their Country to that of *Whig* and *Tory*, and regulate their Conduct accordingly, by the Rules of right Reaſon, common Honeſty, and Self-preſervation.

It is of dangerous Conſequence, for Men to ſet up *Government* and *Party*, as *Two Maſters*; and to ſerve the One, at the Expence and Damage of the Other. Such Men are vitiated in every Principle; and will try a thouſand ways to get over *Laws* and *Penalties*, in order to come at their Deſigns. Severity is the higheſt Favour that can be ſhew'd them. No wonder, they who are ſo bad themſelves, think ill of others; at leaſt ſpeak ill of them, and load the Accuſation, that their own Crimes may eſcape notice. To hear theſe Men call their Neighbours *Papiſts* and *Jacobites*, is in effect, calling them *Villains* and *Traitors* of the worſt Sort; and all *Britains* of Honour and Honeſty will reſent the Affront accordingly: They have as bad a Game to play underhand, amidſt all this Din and Noiſe; and act like thoſe, who *Rob* and *Cry Fire* at the ſame time. Let them only conſider, what Precedents they ſet; and what would become of them, if their own Arts were to be made uſe of againſt them. They would arm the *Mob* againſt the *Government*, for fear of Popery. But who muſt be arm'd againſt them, for fear of *Rebellion*? The Symptoms and Appearances of this latter Diſtemper, are much ſtronger than thoſe of the former; and I believe they would not be miſunderſtood: Either way they have their Ends, if a Diſorder happens. Tho' even in that Caſe they may be diſappointed. For good Conduct and wiſe Councils, will bring *Order* out of *Confuſion*.

ADVERTISEMENT.

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